

AN NATION'S EBENEZER.

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN THE BROAD ST. METHODIST CHURCH,

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA,

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1862.

THE DAY OF PUBLIC THANKSGIVING.

APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES.

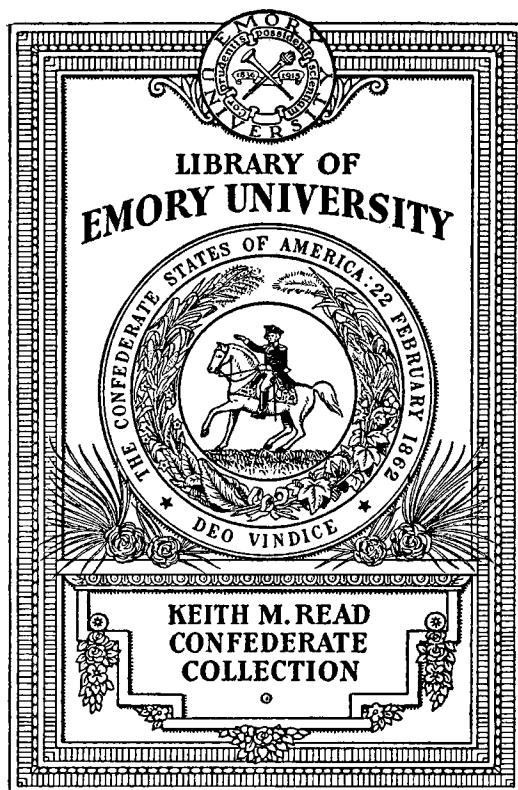
BY REV. D. S. DOGGETT, D. D.

PUBLISHED BY SPECIAL REQUEST.

RICHMOND, VA.:

ENQUIRER BOOK AND JOB PRESS.

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CORRESPONDENCE

RICHMOND, Sept. 19, 1862.

Rev. Dr. DOGGETT,

Dear Sir : Having heard with unfeigned pleasure, the very admirable and able discourse which you delivered on Thursday, the 18th instant, the day designated in the President's proclamation for thanksgiving and prayer, the undersigned would most respectfully ask the favor of you to furnish them a manuscript copy of said discourse, with a view to its publication.

Very respectfully, yours,

J. W. MOORE,

JOHN P. RALLS,

THOMAS MENEES.

DAVID CLOPTON,

F. B. SEXTON.

HON. J. W. MOORE, DAVID CLOPTON, JOHN P. RALLS, F. B. SEXTON and THOMAS MENEES :

Gentlemen : In compliance with your request, I herewith place, at your disposal, a manuscript copy of the discourse delivered on the 18th ultimo, which you heard, and which you were pleased to solicit for publication. My delay in furnishing the enclosed manuscript has been occasioned by a variety of causes which it is needless to mention. Nor am I satisfied with my effort to reproduce what, to so great an extent, was delivered *extempore*. While I have endeavored to preserve its original tenor, I have deviated, as you will perceive, not unfrequently, into new forms of expression, and have also employed a greater degree of condensation than I did in the pulpit. I hope, however, you will be able readily to recognize its general identity in the following pages, and that your kindness will not be abused by a perusal of them.

With high regards, I am, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

D. S. DOGGETT

RICHMOND, VA., Oct. 3, 1862.

A NATION'S EBENEZER.

A SERMON.

Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, hitherto hath the Lord helped us.—I. *Samuel*, 7 : 12.

We have assembled, to-day, to perform an act in exact analogy, and almost identical with that which is celebrated in the language of our text. Both scenes are commemorative; both are memorials of great victories; both signalize the special interposition of Divine Providence. When ancient nations engaged in war, they consulted their oracles, offered sacrifices, and invoked their deities. When they were successful, they not only honored their heroes, but deposited their trophies in the temples of their gods. We have a brighter example to follow, this morning, than the misguided devotions of ancient pagans, and more hallowing recollections to cherish than ever clustered around their costliest oblations. In the clear light of the world's meridian, and in the very centre of its wondering gaze, we meet, as a nation, in Christian temples, to present our homage to the living and the true God, and to erect, on the wayside of our strange and eventful history, a national Ebenezer; to inscribe upon its lofty column and to transmit to posterity the highest and the holiest of all our convictions; "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

To preserve the consistency, and to sustain, as far as possible, the propriety of our subject, we shall attempt,

I. To delineate the remarkable analogue which the text

records; to analyze the example which it so graphically recounts.

1. During the incumbency of Eli and his sons, in the priesthood, corruption had diffused its virus through the whole body of the people. An universal relaxation in religion and morals ensued; the Ark itself, the mystic symbol and the sacred repository of their faith, had been captured; and for twenty years, the nation had groaned under the exacting tyranny of a barbarous race. At length, as if self-moved, a healthful reaction manifested itself in the public mind; a spirit of reformation seemed instinctively to circulate amongst the community and to express itself, at least, in lamentations over their wretched servility. Samuel, the sole representative amongst them, of a once pure and influential order of men, perceived, with patriotic emotions, the auspicious symptom, and determined to improve it. He summoned a convocation of the tribes at a little town by the name of Mizpach; a name perpetuated by the event. The people met in obedience to the summons, at the time and place appointed, and celebrated the occasion by acts of humiliation and prayer before God. Samuel appeared amongst them in his official character.

2. The object of this general convention was, in accordance with the original summons, exclusively religious. It was merely a reformatory measure adopted by the prophet. No other provision was consequently made, than was necessary to accomplish its pious design. The rulers of the Philistines, however, regarded it in a very different light. Their suspicions were aroused. It was, in their estimation, a political gathering to concoct plans for an insurrection. They determined, at once, to crush it, and marched immediately with armed forces to attack and demolish the rebellious encampment. Terror-stricken at the approach of their enemies, especially unprepared as they were for self-defence, no alternative suggested itself but an appeal to Samuel to cry to God without cessation in their behalf; fully persuaded, that in such an emergency, he alone could effect their de-

liverance. The patriot-prophet gladly accepted the invitation, offered a sacrifice, and interceded for his countrymen. It was an awful hour; an hour big with results; with annihilation or a miracle!

3. While Samuel was occupied in these solemn exercises, the Philistines drew up in line of battle. Suddenly, so to speak, a concealed battery, from heaven, opened its dread artillery upon the impious invaders, and swept with destruction their serried ranks; for "the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them." Smitten with a panic, they broke and fled, scattering their equipments in the track of their flight. Emboldened by so wonderful a rescue, the Israelites, seizing the abandoned arms, started in pursuit, and chased the fugitives within their own confines. The enemy were thoroughly routed. The victory was complete.

4. So miraculous an event could not be allowed to pass from memory. When the conquerors returned, and were re-assembled, a simple but imposing ceremony commemorated the great occasion. Neither artist nor chisel were present to impart expression, or to add polish to marble or to granite. The inspired actor extemporized a memorial. Selecting a rude stone from the adjacent field, and in the presence and silence of the worshipping assembly, he set it up and consecrated it as a monument of the ever memorable victory which God had wrought, that day, in Israel. Rude as it was, it caught, embodied, and stereotyped a grand idea; a fundamental principle, as well as an illustrious fact. It would remind the present generation; it would teach future generations, when passing that way, how the God of their fathers had defeated their enemies, and fulfilled his covenant. And as names are something more than sounds, especially such descriptive epithets, as were common to the Hebrew vocabulary, he solemnized the ceremony by conferring upon the stone the significant title of "Ebenezer;" the stone of help; the stone which recalled the interposition of God at the battle of Mizpeh.

Having, thus far, reviewed the instructive example recounted in our text, we proceed,

II. To inquire into the existence of a corresponding obligation upon ourselves; the obligation of raising a national Ebenezer to the God of battles.

It behooves us, first of all, to ascertain the grounds upon which this obligation rests; to search for them; to satisfy ourselves that we do not act from a blind impulse, however sincere; that, upon reflection, we shall approve of our conduct when the exultation of the hour shall have subsided. Let us investigate the question whether, in reality, Divine Providence has put forth his hand in our recent national struggles.

All our inquiries, mathematical or philosophical, must commence with some acknowledged fact; some admitted proposition, in order to render our conclusions certain. Happily we enjoy this advantage to day. Within the period referred to in these services, our efforts, as a nation, have been crowned with undoubted success; with success the most remarkable; with success the most marvellous in the annals of war. Within three months, the enemy has been driven from every battle-field, and the whole character of the war has been reversed. He is now on the defensive; we, after a rapid and brilliant succession of victories, are on the aggressive.

To what cause are these victories to be ascribed? Human agencies have entered largely into the campaign. They have been vigorously applied, and have, perhaps, accomplished all that such agencies can accomplish. Nor will a grateful and admiring country be slow to award to them their full meed of praise. But are our successes due exclusively to military preparations, to the skillful combinations of commanding generals, and to the heroic energy and self-sacrifice of our citizen soldiery? Can we, ought we to account for them on this hypothesis alone? Do we not discover another element in them? Is it a fond delusion, a superstitious caprice into which we have fallen?

Must we arrogate the whole honor to ourselves? Must not God receive his rightful tribute at our hands? To all these questions we reply;

1. That the spontaneous and universal sentiment evinced in the hour of our successes, indicates the interposition of God. Great force of truth must be attached to the unsophisticated convictions of a whole people frankly avowed. The presumption is always in favor of the reality of those convictions. There is a time when human nature speaks its genuine language; when the voice of truth bursts, as it were, instinctively from the bosoms of men, and proclaims, by a species of natural revelation, from the oracle of an awakened consciousness, its testimony to the grandest of all doctrines. It was so in the moment of our recent triumphs. When they were yet fresh in our memories, the whole country resounded with the praise of God. Not only the preacher in his sermon, and the christian at his prayers, but those unaccustomed to the exercises of piety, felt and acknowledged the hand of God. If contrary opinions were entertained, they were suppressed amidst the almost unanimous utterances of a better faith. Now, I maintain, that this spontaneous sentiment of the people indicates the fact of an actual exhibition of Divine power in our successes; that it was a trustworthy exponent of the principle asserted in our text: "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

2. The part which God may rationally be presumed to take in all righteous wars, justifies the same conclusion. From our knowledge of his perfections, as the Ruler of the universe, and of his relations to the creatures of his hand, it is reasonable to infer that he cannot be, like the Olympian Jove, an idle spectator of such events as involve the interests of whole nations, and as are fraught with issues the most tremendous both present and prospective. Wars affect the destinies of mankind and the progress of society. Wars change the current of history. Wars are related to the propagation of the gospel. Wars have the characteristics of a retributive administration. Wars are disciplina-

ry in their results. Now, if our ideas of God are correct, he must not only feel an infinite concern in what so deeply agitates the human race, but he must interfere. He must approve, he must take sides with the right, though many of the instrumentalities employed may not be acceptable to him. He will not suffer public justice and integrity to struggle unaided in a never ceasing whirl of conflict with the elements of iniquity. It cannot be a matter of indifference to him, whether the right or the wrong shall triumph in his own government. He must put forth his own prerogative to support the one and to arrest the other, by such methods as are agreeable to his will. In the bloody tragedies through which we have just passed, and from which we have so signally emerged, God has looked down from his throne upon us with paternal solicitude, and according to the rectitude of our cause, we are constrained to conclude that his almighty hand has wrought our deliverance, and to exclaim with equal piety and truth, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

3. Another consideration favorable to our position, is the reliance of a people in their national struggles, upon God, and not upon themselves, in connection with their successes. When, in the sincerity of their purposes, and the consciousness of their dependence, they have appealed to him and supplicated his aid, and have more than realized their expectations; if the relation of cause and effect be not absolutely apparent, that of antecedent and result cannot be mistaken. Never, perhaps, in the course of national vicissitudes, was there on so large a scale, such implicit a reliance upon Divine Providence; so general an invocation of the Divine blessing, as there was, from one end of this Confederacy to the other, immediately preceding and during the enactment of those tragic scenes, the conclusion of which we this day commemorate. Trust inspired the national heart; prayer poured forth, at a thousand altars, from national lips, that the God of armies would arise in his majesty and espouse the cause of an injured country.

In these affecting exhibitions, victory perched upon our banners. Who can doubt whether she descended from heaven, in merciful condescension to our petitions; and whether, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us?"

4. The inequality in the contest between us and our enemies demonstrates the interposition of God. War, with equal advantages on each side, is, humanly speaking, a game of chances, in which unexpected results may surprise either of the parties. It is a game so complicated in its elements, that uncertainties and misgivings are inseparable from its operations. Even in such a case, success on the side of justice must be ascribed to supernatural agency, rather than to the influence of natural causes, how potential soever they may have been. When, however, the decided majority of human and natural advantages are arrayed against the right, and display all their intensity to defeat it, and are utterly abortive, natural causes are then counteracted, human calculations, so confidently believed, are outwitted, and the issue proves that an extraneous power has decided the contest. In a word, that God has overruled the boasted arrangements of man, that he might vindicate the supremacy of his moral government. Was ever a contest more unequal in all natural means of success, than that into which the Confederate States have been plunged? Did ever an enemy confide in human appliances with higher certainty, or with more plausibility, as if he were solving a problem which admitted of no other conclusion than in his favor? And yet, his processes have disappointed him, and the solution has inured to the feebler side. Who but God, so to speak, has conducted the argument? Who, but he, has proven that "the race is not to the swift, neither the battle to the strong?" "Verily, there is a reward for the righteous; verily, there is a God that judgeth in the earth!"

5. The completeness of the success which has attended our arms, is a proof of the interposition of God. If our success itself, under the conditions of the war, proves that fact, how much more does the definitive character of the suc-

cess prove it? I do not assume that our victories have been virtually decisive of the entire contest. But so far as they have progressed, they have been complete in themselves. They have been decided and effectual victories. If the enemy has not been entirely captured or annihilated, as may have been desired, no uncertainty now rests upon the public mind as to the immediate and, as we trust, the permanent results of those victories. His purposes have been thwarted, his plans have been crushed, his army has been disorganized, and the whole line of his movements has receded from proximity to our Capital to the fortifications of his own, and is still receding towards the banks of the Ohio; so that a radical change has been wrought in the character and complexion of the war. Thus far, our success has been complete, and the unanimous sense of relief and hope corresponds with it. The burden of apprehension is rolled from our shoulders, and the buoyancy of our feelings has returned to its wonted channels. It is in this definite issue, that we have reason to recognize the hand of God. The work of man is imperfect, and the hand of man would have left that issue doubtful. God has set his seal upon it. The path of his Providence has been a path of light; and we may assert, with perfect confidence: "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

6. The ends which have been attained by these victories illustrate the hand of God in them. They are ends worthy of God, worthy of a virtuous people, and honorable to humanity. There is nothing in them that implicates the moral character, or stains the national escutcheon of the Southern States; nothing of which they have cause to be ashamed, or by which they can be reproached by enlightened nations, or by the awards of succeeding generations. What are these ends? Are they rapine, oppression, tyranny, licentiousness, anarchy, irreligion? No! They are all sublime. They are the rights that pertain to all freemen; the rights asserted, by our forefathers, in the immortal Declaration of Independence; the rights of self-government, self-protection, and of conscience; rights

incorporated in the original charter of our liberties; rights guaranteed by God to human civilization; rights denied to us by a spurious and a fanatical Administration. These are the ends for which we are yet fighting, and which have been triumphantly maintained in our recent successes. It is these which add lustre to our victories; which embellish our arms. These ends are the gifts of God, and we may repeat with heightened adoration, to day, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us."

7 The word of God, taken in this connection, establishes the truth of his interposition. For this purpose, we shall call your attention to the selection of a few quotations: "The Lord your God is he that goeth with you to fight for you, against your enemies, to save you. The Lord hath driven out from before you great nations and strong; but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day. It is God that avengeth me, and that bringeth down the people under me, and that bringeth me forth from mine enemies; thou, also, hast lifted me upon on high above them that rose up against me; thou hast delivered me from the violent man. Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle; thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me. It is he who giveth salvation unto kings; who delivereth his servant from the hurtful sword. And what shall I say more? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Sampson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and of Samuel, and of the prophets; who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

All these grounds of obligations to God enter into the question of our recent victories, and demonstrate, that while human instrumentalities have borne a conspicuous and an honored part in them, it was the blessing of God that rendered them successful. To make this, if possible, more ex-

plicit, let us hastily advert to a few particulars. Recall the vast, the inexhaustible resources of our enemy in the men and the materials of war, compared with our own; his long, diligent and elaborate preparation in every branch of the service, naval and military; his malignant and inexorable determination of subjugation and destruction; the consummate arrogance of his expectations repeatedly avowed in private and in public, on the platform and from the press, by courier and by telegraph; his threatening advances and his formidable approaches into the interior of our territory, and to the very precincts of our city; the devastation which blasted the course of his march; the loss of property and the flight of refugees; and then consider the recoil of his forces, the terrible chastisement which he has received, the humiliation which he has suffered, his expulsion from our borders, the progress of our arms, and the prospect of our cause; all within the last three months. Do not all these facts show, without the shadow of a doubt, that "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us?"

Having examined, at sufficient length, the grounds of our duty, on this occasion, it remains for us,

III. To contemplate the mode of its fulfilment. If God has performed his part in these events, he must receive his share of the honor. That honor consists;

1. In cherishing, as a nation, the conviction of his interposition. This conviction has been produced with the force of an intuition; and for the time, it is God's memorial in the hearts of the people; an inscription of homage engraven on the tablet of the national consciousness, upon which he looks with approbation. It must not become effaced. Neither lapse of time, nor the succession of events must obliterate its traces. The tendency of our natures is to forget God when the miracles of his Providence have merged into the tranquil current of habitual prosperity. Against this tendency we must guard, and let the grateful recognition survive in all its original freshness: nay, let it be admitted in the growing fullness of its import, and be culti-

vated and expanded amidst the garnered fruits of our future greatness.

2. God must be honored by the national lips. The glory of our achievements should be ascribed to him. Our words must coincide with the facts, and with our convictions. A verbal acknowledgment of God is an essential part of his praise, because it is the mode by which we evince our sincerity; by which we convey to others our appreciation of Divine Providence, strengthen the general impression of its superintendence, and swell the aggregate amount of influence in behalf of the truth. To suppress our testimony, in this respect, when recounting our victories; to hesitate to associate them with the name and the character of him by whom they have been wrought, is disloyalty to him and an insult to his majesty. It is to withhold a part of the sacrifice demanded at our hands, and to incur the guilt of national ingratitude to 'the Benefactor' whose aid, in the moment of our peril, we supplicated and received. He is "a jealous God, and his glory will he not give to another!" While, therefore, it will be our pleasure and our pride to eulogize the heroic valor of the living and the dead, in this war; while conversation shall incidentally repeat their fame, and eloquence more formally pronounce their panegyric; while poetry shall weave its garland, and song employ its strains for them, let the national voice utter the memory of Sovereign Goodness, and raise, through all the land, the mighty anthem of his praise.

3. It is the duty of a people, so eminently distinguished as we have been, to establish amongst us the permanent worship of God; to honor his sabbaths, to revere his name, to frequent his altars, and to diffuse the religion of the Bible amongst all orders of society, by precept and example. His worship is a memorial to him. It is security to us. The "Bible," said Chillingworth, "is the religion of Protestants." It is more. It is not only the ark of their testimony; it is the ark of their safety, and the bulwark of their liberties. Without its sanctions, armies, navies, victories,

constitutions and laws, will be as unsubstantial as the phantoms of a dream, and as fruitless of ultimate good as the convulsions of an earthquake. If France, in the wild delirium of her revolution, abolished the Bible, and closed the churches in order to inaugurate the experiment of a government without God; let her dismal catastrophe warn the Southern Confederacy to reinstate the Bible to its place, and to constitute every church a Shiloh for the gathering of the people.

4. To honor God aright, a nation must inculcate upon the succeeding generation, the recognition of his Providence. It was made imperative upon the Israelites, thus to transmit the remembrance of their deliverance. The obligation upon us is precisely the same. Parents must rehearse it to their children. Scenes like those through which we have passed, will become the glowing narratives of after times. Sires will repeat them with enthusiasm, and inquisitive childhood will listen with wonder. Let tradition perform its office, by imparting, with its lessons, the recognition of God. But history has also a sacred duty to discharge, in recording the events of this war. It will be incomplete, by whomsoever written, if it omit a chapter on the Providence of God, and the invocation of it by the people. God, it is true, is in all history, because he is in the facts of history. Yet, it has become customary for history to ignore God, as if he had nothing to do with its affairs, and if it were impertinent to introduce his name in the annals of men. The pride of the human heart is intolerant of God, and historians are too obsequious to its dictates. They collect and arrange their materials; they philosophize upon them. But their philosophy knows not God. The true philosophy of history is Divine Providence, and history is the real exponent of events only as it illustrates the interposition of Providence. Those who undertake the task of committing to posterity the record of our times, will be guilty of a startling dereliction, if the manifest and acknowledged hand of God be discarded from their pages. Faithful history will, therefore,

erect its Ebenezer, and inscribe upon its volume, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

5. God is honored by national oblations. "To do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices, God is well pleased," is a Christian maxim, binding, not only upon individuals, but upon communities. It devolves upon them, as an expression of their gratitude, to present their offerings at his altar. Nor need we be at a loss to discover the character of the required oblations. They are those acts and measures of public utility and beneficence which every nation has it in its power to execute. Such is the perfect benevolence of the Ruler of the universe, that his glory is enhanced and his goodness is requited by every plan which promotes the virtue and the happiness of his creatures. We repay his kindness, by displaying our own. It is a debt, therefore, which a nation owes to God, to employ its resources in alleviating the sufferings and improving the condition of humanity, especially within its own limits; to furnish relief to the poor, asylums to the wretched, and education to the ignorant; not only to secure the rights, but to exalt the happiness of its citizens. Upon us, in the very progress of our arms, is thrown an immense responsibility of this kind. The ravages of war have left behind them the wreck of many a fortune, the desolation of many a family, and the mutilation of many a soldier, to excite our sensibilities and to invoke our aid. The magnitude of the calamity appeals to the national heart, and its redress demands nothing less than a natural response. In rendering that redress, we shall glorify God; we shall honor ourselves. A people and individuals reach the pinnacle of their perfection, and are clothed with their highest attributes, when they resemble God in the tenderness of their sympathies and the munificence of their charities.

"No radiant pearl which crested fortune wears;
 No gem that twinkling hangs from beauty's ears,
 Not the bright stars which night's blue arch adorns,
 Nor rising sun that gilds the vernal morn,
 Shine with such lustre as the tear that breaks
 For others' woe down virtue's manly cheeks."

With the discussion of the subject I have done. I have taken advantage of you by its length, but my apology is found in the occasion itself. I will detain you only a few minutes longer, with some concluding reflections.

1. Let us observe the pleasing contrast which we witness between the services of this day and those which we performed, as a nation, a few months ago. Then, smitten with reverses, we fled to the throne of grace. At the summons of our Chief Magistrate, we publicly prostrated ourselves before God in humiliation and prayer; then we were clothed in sackcloth and lay down in ashes; then a dark cloud, with its murky folds, settled upon our sky, and the voice of lamentation and confession ascended to the Lord of Hosts. I well remember that period of depression and apprehension, when our arrogant and exulting foe seemed to be at the point of grasping his coveted prize. Soldier after soldier, fort after fort, and city after city, fell into his hands. Our own was invested with frowning batteries and bristling bayonets, and its capitulation predicted with prophetic confidence. It was an hour of gloom; and one might have recalled, with aptness, the thrilling stanza which recorded the catastrophe of Poland:

"Hope, for a season, bade the world farewell,
And Freedom shrieked as Kosciusko fell."

To-day, the scene is changed. Another summons, from the same official source, brings us together again at the footstool of God, not to weep, but to laugh; not to lament, but to give thanks; not to practice a fast, but to hold a festival; to put on "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Into the object of these exercises we all enter. Gladness fills our hearts, cheerfulness animates our countenances, and songs of deliverance are ready to burst from our lips. The lowering storm has, for a season, passed away; the cloud, charged with thunder, has rolled off, and the long obscured sun shines with unwonted splendor upon the dwellings of a rejoicing population.

2. Our pleasures, to-day, though rich and hallowed, are not unmingled with sentiments of a different character; sentiments well calculated to temper and subdue the tone of our exultation. Our work, on the one hand, is not yet accomplished, and, on the other, it is full of painful recollections. Our victories have been purchased at a high price, and have entailed unutterable anguish on countless families. Many an aged matron bewails the loss of a favorite son, and the grey hairs of many a venerable sire will go down with sorrow to the grave. The heart of many a widow has been broken with grief, and many an orphan has been thrown upon the cold charities of the world. Many a brave man has moistened the soil with his blood, and slept his last sleep upon the field of battle, and left his bones to bleach and to moulder under the suns of summer and the frosts of winter. How truthful, how touching are the poet's words with respect to the encounter of armies in the shock of war:

“ Few, few shall part where many meet,
The snow shall be their winding sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.”

Thus has it been with us on many a hard fought field. I do not recall these melancholy incidents to impair your enjoyments, but to impart to them sobriety and moderation. The most gorgeous phenomenon in nature, whether in heaven or on earth, is the rainbow, as its grand arch reposes on the darkened bosom of the retiring cloud. It is produced by the refraction of the sun's light through falling drops of rain; so, through our tears, the Providence of God is seen in a milder, but not a less resplendent light.

3. We have encouragement to look with confidence to the future, trusting that he who hath helped us “hitherto,” will continue to help us until this great contest shall have ended. Let us not suspend, let us not transfer our faith from Divine to human agency. Let the mercies of our past history augment the hopes of that which is to come. Let no flush of triumph, no repose from fear, flatter us, for a

moment, into self-confidence. Let us avoid the error into which the grand victory of last year betrayed us. The drama of our present campaign is, we have reason to hope, hastening to its close. It comprises three acts, with shifting scenes. Two have passed. One transpired on the banks of the Chickahominy, with all its paraphernalia of horror and of blood. Another, on the twice memorable plains of Manassas, on which the shout of the conqueror has as often resounded. The third is now preparing. Its machinery is concealed. We desire to penetrate the veil, but we cannot. Let us await the issue with patience and fortitude. The curtain will presently rise. Let us hope, in God, that it will, ere long, reveal the transcendent climax of all our victories; the enemy brought to terms; the country delivered from oppression; industry restored to its accustomed channels; prosperity filling the land with abundance; a happy people; and a God enthroned in the temple of our liberties! And unto Him shall be ascribed all majesty and might, dominion and power, forever and ever. Amen.



